AN

ESSAY

ON THE

USEFULNESS

OF

ORIENTAL LEARNING.

621.9.4
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Philadelphia K

Πολλὴ μὲν ἡ Ελλὰς, ἐν ᾗ ἔνεισί πȣ ἀγαθοὶ ἄνδρες· πολλὰ ᾗ ϗ τὰ τῶν βαρβάρων γένη, ȣὓς πάντας χρὴ διερευνᾶσθαι, ζητȣῦντας τοιȣῦτον ἐπῳδὸν, μήτε χρημάτων φειδομένȣς, μήτε πόνων· ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν εἰς ὅ, τι ἂν εὐκαιρότερον ἀναλίσκοιτε χρήματα. Socrates, ap. Platon. Phædon. p. 78. edit. Steph.

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To the Reverend the

RECTOR and FELLOWS OF LINCOLN COLLEGE IN THE Univerſity of *OXFORD.*

Reverend Sirs!

AMONG other Pleaſures, which attend the ſtudy of the *Eaſtern* Languages, it cannot be the leaſt to an ingenuous Mind to obſerve, that Gratitude was held in ſo juſt an eſteem by the Inhabitants of the Eaſt as

to become in a manner proverbial among them,

لَا يَذْهَبُ مَعْرُوفٌ بَيْنَ اللّٰهِ وَالنَّاسِ

Non perit Beneficium inter Deum & Homines

is a pious as well as generous ſentiment, and loudly calls upon the Perſon obliged to be mindful of the Favours conferr'd upon him and to make all poſſible Returns to his Benefactor. Upon this Principle I humbly preſume to addreſs myſelf to You, and gratefully to acknowledge, not only thoſe Aſſiſtances by which I was enabled in any meaſure to purſue my Studies, but likewiſe, thoſe ſingular Advantages of Education which I enjoy'd in a Society remarkable for producing Men of great Piety and

and Erudition, and under Tutors adorn'd with useful and polite Literature, strict Vigilance, and such an agreeable Temper as demanded the Love as well as Regard of the happy Pupil; in a Society, in which Regularity and Discipline, Virtue and Learning, are observed cultivated and encouraged, and in which Good-Nature and Good Manners eminently concur. —*Hæc olim meminisse juvabit.*

A Veneration for the Memory of Dr. *Marshall*, the Deference due to his uncommon Acquisitions in Oriental Learning, the Provision he made for the Improvement of others by the valuable Treasure of *Eastern* Manuscripts and Books bequeath'd by him to the *Bodlejan* and *Lincoln* College Libraries, will,

in

in ſome meaſure, juſtify this Addreſs to a Society, which may juſtly boaſt of ſo great an Ornament to it, of ſo excellent an Example of Religion Loyalty and Learning.

Permit me, Gentlemen, to pay this humble Tribute to true Merit, and to intreat You to receive, with your uſual Candour and Condeſcenſion, this mean attempt of recommending a moſt uſeful Branch of Learning. The Deſign, I am perſuaded, You will approve; my beſt, tho' poor, Endeavours I beg leave to introduce in the Words of the admired *Theocritus*,

Οἵ᾽ ἀυταὶ (Μῶσαι) παρέχωσι, καὶ ὡς
ἐμὸς οἶκος ὑπάρχει,
Τοῖα φέρω.

Whatever

DEDICATION.

Whatever Cenſure theſe may deſerve, I have, at leaſt, this Satisfaction, that they afford me an Opportunity of expreſſing my grateful Reſentment of your Favours, and of profeſſing that ſincere Deference, with which I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your moſt obliged and

---

moſt humble Servant,

PHILOGLOTTUS.

ERRATA.

Page 13. *l.* 18. *for* ii. *r.* xi.—*p.* 19. *l.* 20. *r.* ſc.—*p.* 22. *l.* 21. *r.* Antiquities.—*p.* 29. *l.* 18. *r.* ربصة — *p.* 36. *l.* 25. *r.* صغر. — *p.* 39. *l.* 20, and 21. *for* رني *r.* ربي

AN

ESSAY

On the USEFULNESS of

ORIENTAL LEARNING.

KNOWLEDGE in general is an object which the Mind of Man ſo eagerly purſues[1], that, I am perſuaded, the candid Reader will favourably receive my endeavours to repreſent to him the Uſefulneſs of that Learning from whence all valuable Knowledge has been originally derived, and to direct his views to thoſe once famous parts of the world to which ſome of the moſt eminent Philoſophers owed their greateſt Attainments. It is among the ancient Eaſterns, that we muſt expect to find, at

[1] *Tantus eſt innatus in nobis cognitionis amor & ſcientiæ, &c. Cicero de Finibus*, l. v. p. 393. ed. *Davis.*

leaſt, that Traditional Knowledge[2], which deſcended to Mankind, more pure and extenſive than among others.

If thus much be allow'd, it will be eaſily granted, that the Searcher after Truth muſt find it pureſt at the Fountain-head, and that it muſt ſhine cleareſt in the Eaſt. That I am far from being ſingular in this ſentiment, is evident from the general reſort of the wiſeſt among the ancient Sages thither, purely for the Improvement of their Minds[3]. *Thales* was the firſt of the *Sophi*, or Wiſe Men, famous in *Greece*, and is ſaid to have learn'd his Aſtronomy, Geometry,

[2] The learned Mr. *Shuckford* has obſerved, that the Philoſophy of the Ancients was not Diſputative, but Traditional; that the Principles they went upon to teach or to learn by, were, not to ſearch into the Nature of Things, or to conſider what they could find by Philoſophical Examinations, but, *Aſk and it ſhall be told you; ſearch the Records of Antiquity and you ſhall find what you enquire after.* See this Author at large on this head in *Pref.* to his *Connection*, vol. i. p. 47. *& ſeq.*

[3] *Diodorus Siculus*, lib. i. *Biblioth. Procop. Gazæus in Reg.* lib. iii. c. 2. p. 185. ed. *Meurſ. Huetii Demonſtr. Evang.* prop. 4. c. 8. § 19. *Temple's Eſſay on Ancient and Mod. Learning*, 8vo *Edit. of Miſcellan.* part, 2. p. 12, 22, 25. *Lamy de Tabernac.* l. ii. § 5. *Wilkins, Diſſertat. de Ling. Coptica*, p. 80.

Aſtro-

Aſtrology, Theology in his Travels from his Country *Miletus*, to *Egypt*, *Phœnicia*, *&c.*[4] *Pythagoras* was the Father of Philoſophers and of the Virtues, and ſeems to have gone the fartheſt in ſearch of Learning and Knowledge, and to have brought home the greateſt Treaſures. He went firſt to *Egypt*, where he ſpent twenty two Years in Study, Converſation, *&c.* in order to gain admittance and inſtruction in the Learning and Sciences, that were there in their higheſt Aſcendent. Twelve Years he ſpent in *Babylon*, and in the Studies and Learning of the Prieſts or *Magi* of the *Chaldæans*. Beſides theſe long abodes in thoſe two regions, celebrated for ancient Learning, and where one Author, according to their calculations, ſays, he gain'd the Obſervations of innumerable Ages; he travelled likewiſe upon the ſame account into *Æthiopia*, *Arabia*, *India*, *&c.*[5] *Plato* not

4 *Temple, ubi ſupra*, p. 11.

5 *Id. ibid.* p. 11, 12, 13. *Vid. Shuckford, Pref.* to *Connection*, vol. i. p. 51, *&c.* *Huetii Demonſtr. Evangel.* Prop. iv. c. 2. § 7.

only travell'd over *Egypt* to this end [6], but even acknowledges, that the *Greeks* received their moſt valuable Learning, at leaſt in a great meaſure, from the *Phœnicians* and *Syrians*, *i. e. Hebrews* [7]; from whom [8], in particular from *Moſes*, he has borrow'd ſo largely, that *Numenius* the *Pythagorean* did not ſcruple to ſtyle him Πλάτων Μωσῆς ἀτ∫ικίζων [9]. From theſe *Eaſterns* the *Greeks* learned the uſe of Letters [10] by means of *Cadmus* [11]. And indeed the etymology of this Name, which is plainly derived from the *Hebrew* קדם, clearly diſcovers to us the obligations the *Greeks* are under to the

6 *Cicero*, l. v. *de Finibus*. *Lamy de Tabernac.* l. ii. § 5.

7 *Plato in Cratylo*, p. 426. *Bochart. Phaleg*, l. iv. c. 24. *Shuckford, ubi ſupra*, p. 54. *Temple, ubi ſupra*, p. 8, 9, 12.

8 Ὁ ἐξ Ἑβραίων φιλόσοφος Πλάτων. *Clemens Alexandr. Stromat.* l. i. p. 321. ed. *Potter. cujus not. in loc. vid.* The curious Reader is deſired to peruſe this firſt Book of the *Stromat.* where he will find the ſubject under conſideration treated at large by this moſt learned Father.

9 See this point fully handled by the learned *Ægid. Menagius, Obſervat. in Diog. Laert.* l. iii. *Segm.* 6.

10 See this point very learnedly and curiouſly treated by Mr. *Shuckford, Connection*, vol. i. p. 254, *&c.*

11 Κάδμος ἀγ' ἐς γραπτὰς Ἑλλὰς ἔχει Σελίδας. *Callimach. Herodot. in Terpſich. Lamy de Tabernac.* l. ii. c. 5. § 5.

Eaſterns

Eaſterns for the firſt Elements of Knowledge [12]; and more eſpecially perhaps to the *Hebrews* and *Chaldees*, ſo remarkably characterized by the Oracle,

Μῶνοι Χαλδαῖοι ζοφίλω λάχον, ἠδ' ἄρ' Ἑβραῖοι.

The Obſervatory on the Tower of *Babel* was probably the firſt; and we know the *Chaldæans* were very eminent Preceptors in Aſtronomy [13]. The *Egyptians*, the Parents of Arts and all Philoſophical Science [14], were the firſt who attempted to ſcrutinize and meaſure the Heavens, and, favour'd by the Serenity and Clearneſs of their Atmoſphere [15], introduced many uſeful Improvements in Aſtronomy [16]. From the *Eaſterns Solon* copied ſome perhaps of his moſt excellent Laws [17]; and, while the Names of *Mi-*

[12] *Lamy, ibid.* [13] *V. Marſham. Can. Chron. Sec.* xvi. p. 504. ed. *Franeq.*

[14] *Macrob. Saturn.* l. i. c. 15. *Somn. Scip.* l. i. c. 19.

[15] *Alpini Hiſt. Ægypti Nat.* l. i. c. 1. p. 4.

[16] *Macrob. Somn. Scip.* l. i. c. 21. *Alpin. ubi ſupra,* l. i. c. 1. p. 2,

[17] See *Biblioth. Biblica, Occaſ. Annotat. N.* 3. on *Deuteronomy. Huetii Demonſtrat. Evang.* Prop. iv. c. 2. § 6. c. 11. § 3.

thridates

thridates[18] and *Avicenna* laſt, the *Eaſterns* muſt be acknowledged Adepts in Medicine. We are indebted to the *Eaſterns* almoſt for the Preſervation of the ſeveral branches of Philoſophy; which, by tranſlating the *Greek* Writers, particularly into the *Arabick* Language, they reſcued from the fatal Ignorance, that overſpread the weſtern hemiſphere about the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

'Tis worth obſerving, that the *Arabick* Tongue is admirably adapted to the conveyance of Philoſophical Knowledge; inſomuch, that ſome particulars, which cannot be expreſs'd without Barbarity in the *Latin* Idiom, are not only deliver'd with Accuracy, but even flow with Elegance, in the *Arabick*.

With theſe advantages, when the *Moors* were in poſſeſſion of *Spain*, *Ariſtotle* in the *Arabian* dreſs travell'd thither; and when, upon his being tranſlated out of *Arabick* into *Latin*, he became known to the Weſtern World, he was ſo univerſally admired, that, after ſome years,

[18] *Vid. Le Clerc. Hiſt. de la Medicine, Part.* i. l. iii. c. 3. p. 390, 391.

it

it was provided by publick Authority, that, No one ſhould contradict *Ariſtotle*[19].

The Orator cannot want inducements to declare in favour of Oriental Learning; if he obſerves the Sublimity of Thought, the Expreſſiveneſs and Clearneſs of Style, the entertaining method of alluring the Mind to Morality by beautiful Metaphors and pertinent Fables, which run through the Writings of the *Eaſterns*, he muſt acknowledge them Beauties worthy to be copied, at leaſt, ſo far as the cooler fancies and imaginations of the *Weſterns* will permit.

That an acquaintance with the *Eaſtern* Languages is neceſſary to compleat the Critick, even in his diſquiſitions on Profane Learning, may appear from the difficulties and obſcurities which an ignorance of theſe has betray'd Men into. While ſome Criticks on that paſſage of *Virgil*,

durumque cubile
Inarime Jovis imperiis impoſta Typhœo.
ÆN. IX. ℣ 715.

[19] *Vid. Præfat. in Aldrich Logicam*, § 9.

have

have concluded *Inarime*, therein mention'd, to be the Iſland *Iſchia* or *Ænaria*, on the coaſt of *Naples*, ſouth of *Prochytæ*, and others have made it a Mountain of *Cilicia*, and others again have placed it in *Lydia*, our learned Countryman *Dickinſon*[20] ſeems to have clear'd up the point, and to have corrected what we may preſume to call an error in *Virgil*, by obſerving, that he has render'd by one Word, *Inarime*, what *Homer*, from whom he borrow'd this paſſage, expreſſes in two, ἐν Ἀρήμοις, in *Aram*, or *Syria*, which is frequently call'd ארם[21], and that *Homer* alludes to the Account of the remarkably large Bed of King *Og* (whom he proves to be the ſame with *Typho*) tranſmitted to us by *Moſes*[22]. This will appear probable from a view of the whole paſſage, which *Dickinſon* reads thus,

[20] *Delphi Phœnicizantes*, c. 2. *ap. Crenii Faſcic.* 1.

[21] The Inhabitants of *Syria* were known alſo among the *Greeks* by the Name of *Arimæans* or *Aramæans*, Τὰς Σύρας Ἀρίμας δίχα, ὃς νῦν Ἀράμας λέγεσιν. *Vid. Strabo*, l. xiii. & l. xvi.

[22] Deut. iii. 11.

Γαῖα δ' ὑπεστονάχιζε Διὶ ὡς τερπικεραύνῳ
Χωομένῳ, ὅτε τ' ἀμφὶ Τυφωέϊ γαῖαν ἱμάσσῃ
Εν Αρίμοις, ὅθι φασὶ Τυφωέος ἔμμεναι
εὐνάς.

Il. ii. l. 781, &c.

A knowledge of the *Hebrew* may likewiſe ſupply us with a more plauſible account of the original of the Exclamation Ελελεῦ Ιὺ Ιὺ, in the celebration of the *Oſchophoria*, than that aſſign'd by *Plutarch*[23]. The Biographer makes it only an Exclamation of Grief, occaſion'd by the death of *Ægeus*, and, conſequently, a mere ſound expreſſive of a Sorrow inconſiſtent with the celebration of a Feſtival; whereas, if we ſuppoſe it to be a tranſcript from that glorious and joyful Ejaculation הללו יה in uſe among the *Hebrews*, it appears an Addreſs worthy the Deity, and very well adapted to the Feſtivity of the Solemnity[24]. To mention one inſtance more to our preſent purpoſe; we have (ſays the learned

[23] *In Theſeo.*
[24] *Vid. Dickinſon. Delphi Phœniciz.* c. 6.

Shuckford 25) *Sanchoniathon*'s account of [the Creation] in *Euſebius*, and, if we throw aſide the Mythology and falſe Philoſophy, which thoſe that lived after him added to his Writings, we may pick up a few very ancient and remarkable truths; namely, that there was a *dark* and *confuſed Chaos*, and *a Blaſt of Wind* or *Air* to put it in a ferment or agitation; this Wind he calls ἄνεμος Κολπία, not the Wind *Colpia*, as *Euſebius* ſeems to take it, but ἄνεμος *Col-Pi-Jah* קול-פי-יה, *i. e. The Wind* or *Breath of the Voice of the Mouth of the Lord* 26. Theſe hints may in ſome meaſure ſhew how neceſſary the Eaſtern Learning and Languages are to a right underſtanding the Mythology and even Etymologies of the ancient Heathens, without which our

25 *Preface to vol.* i. of his *Connection*, p. 42. See likewiſe *Tribbechovii Verit. Creat. Mundi, apud Crenii Faſcic.* 1. p. 289, 290.

26 In this expreſſion we have evident footſteps of the doctrine of a Trinity of Perſons in that Divine Eſſence which created the Univerſe. The words in the original are ἐν Ϛ Κολπία ἀνέμου, which may be moſt emphatically and truly explain'd and render'd by thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt, בדבר יהוה שמים נעשו וברוח פיו כל צבאם PSAL. xxxiii. 6.

Critical

Critical Knowledge muſt be very ſuperficial.

Conſiderable improvements in our Civil and Canon Law might be drawn from thoſe Memoirs of the firſt Empires of the World, and from thoſe Canons and Conſtitutions of the Primitive Church, which are extant among the *Eaſterns*, but, which we are too much unacquainted with. We are likewiſe unhappily ſtrangers to the Laws of the *Aſſyrian*, *Chaldæan*, *Median*, and *Perſian* Governments, which, from the Greatneſs and Duration of thoſe Empires, we may aſſure ourſelves, were very excellently contrived. *Selden* and *Bodinus*, who are juſtly eſteem'd very eminent men in the Profeſſion, have afforded us, in the uſe they have made of the *Eaſtern* Learning in this particular, ſufficient ſpecimens of the Advantages which may from thence ariſe to theſe moſt important branches of the Law [27].

But, above all, when we conſider, that Religion, which Man is moſt nearly concern'd to receive from the firſt and pu-

[27] *Caſtelli Orat. de Ling. Arab.* p. 15.

reſt ſpring, was in the Eaſt continued moſt uncorrupted in the ſucceſſion of the Patriarchs, was in the Eaſt reveal'd to *Moſes*, was in the Eaſt deliver'd to mankind by the Son of God himſelf, the Religious man and the Scholar muſt conclude, that the Eaſt has been the Reſervatory of Religious as well as Natural Knowledge[28], and that therefore it muſt highly tend to promote both, to uſe all poſſible endeavours to renew an acquaintance with the ancient *Eaſterns*, and to retrieve the remains of that valuable Knowledge which once prevail'd amongſt them.

The more clearly to evince the uſefulneſs of the Oriental Learning, it may be proper to enter into a more particular detail of the excellencies of the *Eaſtern* Languages, and of thoſe claims by which they ſeverally challenge our eſteem and attention.

To begin therefore with ſome of thoſe advantages which juſtly recommend the *Hebrew*. The Antiquity of this Language is ſuch, that it has been reaſonably ſup-

[28] *Vid. Caſtell. ibid.* p. 6.

poſed

poſed to be, not only the moſt ancient[29], but alſo, the original from which all other languages have been derived[30]. The names of a vaſt number of People, who are deſcended from the *Hebrews*, do ſhew the Antiquity of both the Nation and Language; the *Aſſyrians* derive their name from *Aſhur*, the *Elamites* from *Elam*, *Jupiter*, or rather *Jovis Pater*, among the *Latins*, and Ἰάω and Εὐοῦ a name of *Bacchus* among the *Greeks*[31], are derived from *Jehovah*[32], *Ceres* from *Gheres* which ſignifies *Grain*[33], *&c.* Ἡφαιστος, or, ac-

[29] *Vid. Targum. Jonathan. & Hieroſol. ad Gen.* xi. 1. *Feuard. Not.* 4. *in Irenæi* l. ii. c. 41. *adv. Hæreſ.* p. 164. *ed. Grab. Strauchii Dub. Hiſtoric. & Chronolog. Poſ.* 4. *ap. Crenii Faſc.* 2. *Exercit. Philolog. Hiſtoric.* p. 113. *Rollin, Hiſt. Ancienne,* tom. ii. part. 2. p. 602. *Shuckford's Connect.* vol. i. p. 112, *&c. Th. Hayne Diſſert. de Ling. Cognat. ap. Crenii Analecta,* p. 23, 36, 37. *Nicholſon. Diſſert. Philolog. de Univ. Orbis Linguis,* p. 3. *ap. Diſſert. ex Occaſ. Sylloges Orat. Domin. ſcript. ad Chamberlayn.*

[30] *Schickard. Horol. Ebræum,* p. 141. *Stackhouſe, Appar. to Hiſt. of the Bible,* p. xlv, xlvi. *Thoughts concerning Religion Natural and Revealed,* p. 15. *Lamy's Introd. to Holy Script.* as tranſlated by *Bundy,* b. ii. c. 5. *Nicholſon, ubi ſupra,* p. 9.

[31] *V. Fulleri Miſcell. Sacr.* l. ii. c. 6. l. iv. c. 14.

[32] *Thoughts concerning Religion,* p. 84. *Fulleri Miſcell. Sacr.* l. ii. c. 6.

[33] *Lamy, ubi ſupra.*

cording

cording to the *Doric* dialect, Αφαιστος, a name of *Vulcan*, from אב אש, or, according to the *Chaldee* dialect, אב אשתא, *the Father* or *Inventor of Fire*[34]; and it is remark'd by ſeveral learned men, that there is no language in which ſome remains of the *Hebrew* are not to be found[35].

The knowledge of the *Hebrew* appears in ſome meaſure neceſſary, even, to our forming juſt apprehenſions of the Laws of the ancient *Grecian* Sages. For, as the beſt Laws in *Greece* were but copies of the *Moſaic* Law (as ſome learned men in the laſt century have very fully ſhewn, and of which any impartial perſon may be eaſily convinced, if he will compare thoſe Laws in their original languages, and conſider how nearly the *Greek* approaches to an elegant tranſlation of the *Hebrew*[36]) it muſt be allowed, that the conciſeſt and moſt certain method of gaining a right

34 See the learned Dr. *Hutchinſon*'s note on *Xenophon de Cyri Inſtitut.* l. vii. p. 526. of his excellent edition of that work, *Oxon.* 1727. and *Bochart. Geograph. Sacr. pars poſter.* l. i. c. 12.

35 *Lamy, ubi ſupra.*

36 See *Univerſal Hiſtory*, vol. iii. p. 331.

under-

underſtanding of the drift, import, and excellency of thoſe Laws muſt be a previous application to that original Code from which they were borrowed.

Ariſtotle, we are aſſured, eſteemed an acquaintance with the *Hebrew* learning ſo expedient to his diſquiſitions, that he made himſelf a maſter of that branch of literature, and was well verſed therein [37].

If we enquire into thoſe excellencies which uſually recommend the learned languages, we ſhall find the *Hebrew* to be an original and eſſential language, that borrows of none, but lends to all. Some of the ſharpeſt Pagan Writers, inveterate enemies to the religion and learning of both *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, have allowed the *Hebrew* tongue to have a noble Emphaſis and a cloſe and beautiful Brevity [38]. The *Hebrew* is a language, for uniformity and ſimplicity, of all others the moſt eaſy, and yet, at the ſame time, ſo full of excellent wiſdom and ſkill in the

37 *Univ. Hiſt. ibid.* p. 330. *Tribbechovii Verit. Creat. Mundi*, p. 255.

38 Ἐχει δὲ καὶ τὰ βάρβαρα ὀνόματα πολλὴν μὲν ἔμφασιν πολλὴν δὲ συντομίαν. *Jamblich. de Myſter.* § 7. c. 5.

contrivance

contrivance of it, as, conſidering it merely as a language, will afford exerciſe for the acuteſt parts, and give pleaſure to the moſt curious [39]. The Old Teſtament is the rich treaſury of all the ſublimity of thought, moving tenderneſs of paſſion, and vigorous ſtrength of expreſſion, which are to be found in all the languages by which mortals declare their minds [40]. One word is often a good deſcription, and gives you a ſatisfactory account of the chief or diſtinguiſhing property or quality of the thing or perſon named. It would be no difficult matter for a man of diligence and good taſte, competently ſkill'd in the *Hebrew* and Claſſical Learning, to prove, that the *Hebrew* Bible has every beauty and excellence that can be found in all the *Greek* and *Roman* Authors, and a great many more and ſtronger than any in all the moſt admired Claſſics [41]. If it be objected, that this repreſentation ſeems to affect the Holy Bible rather than barely the *Hebrew* lan-

39 *Preface* to Dr. *Grey's Hebrew Grammar*, p. 3.
40 *Blackwall's Sacred Claſſics Def. &c.* p i. c. 1.
41 *Id. ibid.*

guage,

guage, and that the world is ſtored with variety of excellent Tranſlations; it may be anſwer'd, that this variety is an argument in favour of the ſtudy of the Original. For, amidſt a diverſity of Interpretations, how ſhall we be aſcertain'd of the true one without reſorting to the Original? and, in ſhort, after we have puzzled and perplex'd ourſelves with turning over and comparing the beſt Tranſlations, we can only know, that the authors of ſuch Tranſlations have acquainted us with the particulars we read in them, but cannot aſſure ourſelves, that the Holy Spirit has dictated ſuch accounts in the Sacred Text[42]. Add to this, that every Language has its idioms and peculiar beauties, which it is not poſſible to expreſs or preſerve in their native energy when tranſlated into any other Language[43]. This

[42] *Vid. Beveridge de Ling. Orient. Præſtant.* p. 10.

[43] Αλλ' ἔστι τινὰ καθ' ἕκαστον ἔθνος ἰδιώματα, ἀδυνατα εἰς ἄλλο ἔθνος διὰ φωνῆς σημαίνεσθαι· ἔπειτα καὶ εἰ οἷόν τε αὐτὰ μεθερμηνεύειν, ἀλλὰ τήν γε δυναμιν οὐκέτι φιλάτθ τὴν αὐτὴν. *Jamblich. de Myſter.* § vii. c. 5. *Il eſt remarquable que Dieu a donné à chaque langue un caractére, un genie particulier. Rollin Hiſt. Anc.* tom. xi. part. 2. p. 602. *Ockleii Introd. ad Ling. Orient.* p. 14.

is more eſpecially obſervable of the *Hebrew*, which is a Language of a peculiar caſt both in the contexture of its words and the cadence of its periods, and contains certain expreſſions, whoſe emphaſis can no more be tranſlated into another Language, than the water of a Diamond can be painted, without detracting from the Original [44].

The awful idea with which the Great and Tremendous Name of God יהוה אלהים muſt fill every pious breaſt, the glorious intimation it gives us of a Trinity of Perſons in One Divine Eſſence, the Majeſtick Repreſentation therein of God as *Exiſtence* in the abſtract, and the many other moſt ſublime and exalted notions implied therein, which no other Language affords words to expreſs [45], and in compariſon of which the Sacred Name in other Languages appears almoſt low and inſignificant: I ſay, this conſideration can be no ſmall inducement to the pious

44 *Stackhouſe's Appar.* to *Hiſt. of the Bible*, p. 32. *Beveridg. ubi ſupra*, p. 18.

45 The learned Reader is deſired to peruſe what *Fuller* has wrote on this ſubject, *Miſcell. Sacr.* l. ii. c. 6. p. 202, 203. l. iv. c. 13. ed. *Lond.*

Scholars

Scholar to make himſelf acquainted with this Language.

The laſt argument I ſhall mention in favour of the ſtudy of the *Hebrew* ſhall be drawn from the evident neceſſity there is, that thoſe young Gentlemen, who apply themſelves to the ſtudy of Divinity, with a deſign to qualify themſelves for the Miniſterial Function, ſhould be early acquainted with the Holy Scriptures in the Original Languages; for theſe muſt be our *dernier* reſort in all doubtful caſes and on all controverted points[46], and the Originals muſt at laſt determine us. Theſe, we know, are the immediate Inſpirations of God himſelf, and conſequently Infallible, whereas Tranſlations, as ſuch, as

[46] *Latinæ quidem Linguæ homines —— duabus aliis ad Scripturarum Divinarum cognitionem opus habent, Hebræa ſc & Græca, ut ad exemplaria præcedentia recurratur, ſi quam dubitationem attulerit Latinorum interpretum infinita varietas. S. Aug. de Doctr. Chriſt* l. ii. c. 11. n. 16. *Ut Veterum Librorum fides de Hebræis voluminibus examinandæ eſt, ita & Novorum Græci ſermonis normam deſiderat. S. Hieron. Epiſt.* 28. *ad Lucin. Beticum. Du Pin Hiſt. of the Canon of the O. and N. Teſtament,* b. i. c. 10. § 5. where this learned writer has ſhewn the ſentiments of the ancients with regard to the neceſſity there is of a knowledge of the Original Languages to make a good Interpreter of the Holy Scripture.

well as Tranſlators, muſt be ſubject to Miſtakes.

Having thus endeavour'd to ſhew ſome of thoſe advantages which attend a knowledge of the Biblical *Hebrew*, it may be proper, in the next place, to take a view of ſome of thoſe which ariſe from an acquaintance with the *Rabbinical* and *Talmudical*.

It has been acknowledged by the Learned, and by a late great Critic [47] urged as an ornament to the Sacred Page, that the New Teſtament abounds with *Hebraiſms* and thoſe modes of ſpeech which were familiar to the *Jews* of the age in which that Divine Code was compiled; and, conſequently, it muſt be a purſuit and labour worthy a Divine to trace out the proper ſenſe and acceptation of ſuch Modes of Speech in thoſe ancient volumes of the *Hebrews* which were compoſed about the time of the commencement of the *Chriſtian Æra* [48]. The admirable uſe the learned *Lightfoot* has made of theſe

47 Mr. *Blackwall, Sacred Claſſics*, part i. p. 1.

48 *Vid. Relandi Prolegom. in Analecta Rabbin.* p. 14. *Helvici Tract. de Chald. Paraphraſ.* p. 20.

aſſiſt-

aſſiſtances ſufficiently juſtifies this remark. The Writers of the New Teſtament frequently allude to the Manners, Rites, and Ceremonies prevalent in the age in which they lived, and of theſe the *Gemara* gives us the fulleſt repreſentation. With how much greater a luſtre muſt the appoſiteneſs, weight, majeſty, and wiſdom of thoſe glorious Diſcourſes, which flow'd from the mouths and pens of our Saviour and his Apoſtles, appear to one acquainted with theſe particulars, than to one a novice therein! Among our modern Commentators on the Old Teſtament, few, if any, have ſucceeded in their explanations of the Sacred Text, who have not conſulted the *Rabbinical* Commentaries, made uſe of the aids which thoſe afforded, and taken the true and proper ſignification of many words from them; which juſtifies *Munſter*'s remark, *Inepte illos agere, qui, contemptis Hebræis ſcriptoribus, libros V. Inſtrumenti interpretantur* [49]. That we may not ſeem to aſſert this without foundation, it may be

[49] *Vid. Relandi Prolegom. in Analecta Rabbin.*

proper

proper to mention one inſtance to our preſent purpoſe. The relation of *Jephthah*'s Vow, and the Execution of it, (JUDG. xi.) have much perplex'd Commentators, who have too generally read theſe words with a Copulative thus —— *ſhall ſurely be the Lord's,* AND *I will offer it up for a burnt-offering,* and concluded, that *Jephthah* Sacrificed his Daughter [50]; whereas, *Kimchi,* by duly attending to the Original, and obſerving that the *Vau* may be render'd by *or* inſtead of *and* (as it is EXOD. xxi. 15.) clears up the difficulty, and gives us this plain and eaſy Interpretation —— *ſhall be the Lord's,* or Holy to the Lord (if it be not fit for a Sacrifice to God) *or* (if it be fit) *I will offer it up for a burnt-offering* [1].

The *Talmud* will be likewiſe uſeful to *Chriſtians* [2], ſince it contains many things which not only illuſtrate the Antiquitie of the New Teſtament, the Sacred Cho-

[50] *V. Joſephi Antiq. Jud.* l. v. c. 7. § 10. ed. *Hudſon. Marſhami Can. Chron. Sec.* ix. p. 170.

[1] *V. Ockleii Introd. ad Ling. Orient.* c. vii. p. 82. *Marſham. ubi ſupra,* p. 170.

[2] *V. Hayne Præfat. ad Diſſertat. de Ling. Cognat. apud Crenii Analecta,* p. 14, *&c.*

rography, and the Parables and Proverbs alledged and cited by our Bleſſed Saviour, but alſo affords conſiderable light to the Prophecies which relate to the *Meſſiah* [3].

Not to multiply diviſions, we may, under this head, proceed to ſome arguments in favour of the *Chaldee*.

As every the leaſt part of Scripture muſt be held ineſtimable by the *Chriſtian* and Scholar, ſo, if the argument made uſe of above in recommendation of the *Hebrew*, *viz.* that the Books of the Old Teſtament are penn'd almoſt wholly in that Language, be of force, it will be likewiſe concluſive with regard to the *Chaldee*, the greateſt part of the Books of *Daniel* and *Ezra* being wrote in that Language.

The excellent uſe which may be made of the *Targums* muſt be likewiſe an encouragement to the ſtudy of this Language. As the *Jews* eſteem them of equal authority with the *Hebrew* Scriptures [4] themſelves, all arguments drawn from them in behalf of *Chriſtianity* are

3 *Præfat. in Cellarii Rabbiniſm.*

4 *V. Helvici Tract. de Chald. Bibl. Paraphr.* c. 4.

of

of force againſt the *Jews* [5]. Nor is this partial uſe the only one that is to be made of them; there are certainly many articles in them which favour and illuſtrate the *Chriſtian* cauſe, and which, though they want the evident characteriſticks of a Divine Original, yet, were certainly received from the Ancients, and convey'd down by the Schools of the Prophets [6]. St. *John* very emphatically ſtyles the Son of God the Λόγος or *Word*, agreeably to the Old Teſtament, as PSAL. xxxiii. 6. *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, &c.* and, leſt any one ſhould imagine, that this ſtyle imported no more than the Decree or Will of God, the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe acquaints us, that the Ancients underſtood it, in a much higher ſenſe, of a Divine Perſon, ἰδιοϋπόστατον, which has a proper Hypoſtaſis or Subſiſtence Perſonally diſtinct from the Father [7]; which remarkably confirms the ſignificancy and propriety of this appellation made uſe of by St. *John*, who ſeems to have

[5] See *Kidder's Demonſtrat. of the Meſſias*, Part ii. p. 33. Part iii. p. 194, & *ſeq.* 2d Edit.

[6] *Helvic. ubi ſupra.* [7] *Id. ibid.* & c. 5.

intended

intended to give the *Jews* a full, diſtinct, and proper Idea of a Phraſe become familiar to them, and ſo frequently occurring in the Paraphraſes, and to have deſign'd to ſignify to them, that That *Word* of *Jehovah*, which, from the ancient traditions of the Prophets, they believed to have Created the World, *&c.* was the Perſon he now preached to them, that That *Word* is the Son of God, the Promiſed *Meſſiah*, *&c.* The ſame ſentiments ariſe likewiſe from other ſimilar paſſages; as, when the Evangeliſt ſtyles the *Logos* Μονογενὴς or *Only-begotten*, it appears from the *Jeruſalem Targum* (in which the *Word* of *Jehovah* calls himſelf יחידי[8]) that the *Jews* were not unacquainted with this Epithet as applied to ſuch a Perſon.

The Illuſtrations which the *Targums* afford us of the Sacred Writings in many inſtances repreſent to us the Senſe of the Original elegantly and perſpicuouſly. Perhaps, for ſome reaſons, the *Chaldee* Paraphraſes may be allow'd a precedence even to the *Greek* Verſions; ſince not only their

[8] *Id. ibid.*

Authority in the eſteem of the *Jews* (as has been obſerved) renders the Arguments, drawn from them in defence of *Chriſtianity*, more concluſive with regard to thoſe Oppoſers of it; but, they likewiſe ſupply us with truly pious and orthodox Interpretations of many Paſſages relating to the *Meſſiah* [9], vindicate them from the perverſe conſtructions and miſapplications of ſome *Rabbins* and others who have follow'd them, and expreſsly aſſert the Divinity of the *Meſſiah* [10]. They afford us alſo numerous and very remarkable notices of and atteſtations to the Doctrine of the ever-bleſſed Trinity [11]; Theſe are advantages not ſo apparent in the *Greek* Verſions. Theſe Paraphraſes (eſpecially as ſome of them were wrote before the time of our Bleſſed Saviour [12], when, 'tis generally acknowledged, the *Hebrew* Text was free from the ſuſpicion of being corrupted) may be farther of uſe to us in

9 *Id. ibid.* c. 7, 9. 10 *Id. ibid.* c. 6.

11 *Id. ibid.* c. 5.

12 *Onkelos* (whoſe Paraphraſe on the Pentateuch) and *Jonathan Ben Uziel* (whoſe Paraphraſe on the Prophets are ſtill extant) flouriſh'd about forty years before *Chriſt. Beveridg. de Ling. Orient. Præſt.* p. 20.

confirming

confirming the genuine reading and purity of the *Hebrew* Text; not that we are abſolutely to judge of and determine the Reading of the Original from theſe or any other Verſions, but, we may eſteem them as very material evidences in atteſting the true and genuine Reading of the Text, and thereby vindicating it from the miſtaken gloſſes of other Tranſlations and Interpreters [13]. I ſhall mention but one more particular in which theſe Paraphraſes may be highly ſerviceable to us; and that is, the Inſight they give us into the Meaning of ſome paſſages of Scripture, which a peculiar conſtruction or form of expreſſion, or ſome words which occur perhaps but once or rarely, have rendered obſcure [14].

The Conciſeneſs, and withal, Perſpicuity of Style, which are peculiar to the *Arabick* Language, and enable the *Arabian* to expreſs that in few words, which, in other Languages, requires tedious Periphraſes; thoſe Beauties in this Language

[13] The Reader will find many inſtances to our preſent purpoſe in the treatiſe of *Helvicus* before cited, c. 8.

[14] *Vid. Helvic. ibid.* c. 10.

which cannot be preſerved in a Tranſlation; the Elegance with which the Words are ranged, and the Sweetneſs with which they flow and reflect the Senſe undiſturbed and clear; even the accurate and ſignificative Proportion of their Letters to each other, by which they heighten or lower the Thought; the great care *Arabick* authors have taken to exclude whatever may ſeem unharmonious to a delicate ear, cannot but recommend this Language to the Orator [15]. If we admire the *Italian* Language for its Frequency of Vowels, we ought ſurely to pay the ſame regard to the *Arabick*, which, in words genuinely *Arabick*, never ſuffers two Conſonants to concur, but always interpoſes a Vowel, or, at leaſt, ſoftens that harſhneſs of ſound, which the concurrence of two Conſonants often occaſions, by ſuch means as the Language is capable of without obſcuring the Senſe.

[15] See the learned Dr. *Pococke*'s Oration in praiſe of the *Arabick*, from which many of theſe obſervations relating to that Language are borrow'd.

The Copiouſneſs of this Language is another recommendation of it [16]; for, though what is now left us be only قليلا من كثير *a little out of a great deal*, yet even theſe venerable ruins ſurprize the Reader with the greateſt Variety of Synonymous Words, inſomuch, that one of their Lexicographers has enumerated above Twelve Millions of Words obſolete and in uſe. But, that we may not imagine, that this *Copia* renders the Language Verboſe, it may be proper to obſerve, that the *Arabick* is well ſupply'd with Words ſo full and comprehenſive as, ſingly, to expreſs entire Sentences. Thus قاصرة ſignifies a Woman ſo very fond of her Huſband as to look on or ſpeak to no one beſides him; عدة imports the Period of Time, within which, if the Huſband does not return, the Wife is at liberty to marry another [17].

Among other ſtudies, the *Arabians* applied themſelves to Genealogies and Hiſtory; they were likewiſe eminent in Me-

16 *V. Caſtelli Orat. de Ling. Arab.* p. 11.

17 *Caſtell. ibid.* p. 11, 12. where the Reader will find many inſtances to this purpoſe.

dicine

dicine, but they directed their ſtudies principally to the Knowledge and Purity of their own Language. The better to cultivate this, they labour'd to excel in Poems and Diſſertations. The former were their *Encyclopædiæ* and Pandects of Wiſdom, and to their Poets they were careful to pay very ſingular and diſtinguiſhing Honours. Their Acquiſitions in all the branches of Philoſophy were truly valuable. For, after they were ſomewhat recover'd from that general devaſtation which *Mohammed*'s Conqueſts brought upon them, encouraged by the Honours which *Almamon* (the ſeventh Chalif of the family of the *Abbaſidæ*) paid to Learning [18], the Arts and Sciences flouriſh'd ſo quickly and generally among them, that thoſe Regions, which before were condemn'd and ſlighted as rude and barbarous, now became the Mart of Literary Commerce, and an Acquaintance with that Language, which had been in uſe only among the Natives, now became a part of Politeneſs neceſſary to diſtinguiſh

[18] *V. Le Gallois, Trait. des Bibliotheques*, p. 145.

ſuch

ſuch as would appear above the Vulgar. Whatever *Greece* afforded, worthy to adorn their Soil and Climate, they tranſplanted, and improved by ſuch Diſcoveries as the Induſtry of Men, not inferiour to the *Greeks* themſelves in Genius and Aſſiduity, could make. We cannot therefore but believe, that, were the Remains of theſe indefatigable Writers ſuffer'd to appear, they would lay open many noble treaſures of uſeful Knowledge, and (as ſome have dared to promiſe the world) would recover ſeveral valuable Fragments to the works of the moſt eminent Writers of *Greece* and *Rome* [19].

It has been obſerved by the great *Saville* (in his commendations of the induſtry of the *Eaſterns* in promoting the ſtudy of Medicine and the Mathematicks)

19 The learned Dr. *Caſtell* aſſures us, that the *Arabians* and *Syrians* are poſſeſs'd of ſome Works of *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, *Livy*, *Galen*, *&c.* and even of ſome Writings of the *Chriſtian* Fathers, which the *Europeans* are utterly ſtrangers to, *ubi ſupra*, p. 14. and we learn from the Sieur *Le Gallois*, that there are in a Library at *Fez* all the Books of *Livy*, with thoſe of *Pappus* of *Alexandria*, a great Mathematician, thoſe of *Hippocrates*, *Galen*, and many other celebrated Authors, whoſe Writings never came compleat to us. *Trait. des Biblioth.* p. 146.

that

that the Praxis of the *Arabians* is allow'd by all infinitely to exceed that of the ancient *Greeks*; and it is the opinion of the very learned *Bainbridge*, that there is ſcarce the leaſt particular in the Syſtems of the Aſtronomers of his time which did not appear before in the obſervations made by the Learned in the Eaſt. In ſhort, to the *Eaſterns* we owe ſome of the moſt noble diſcoveries in Philoſophy, and much greater advantages might we reap from their labours, did not our ignorance deprive us of them. We deſpiſe the *Arabian* Philoſopher, becauſe not better known to us, and becauſe ſpeaking to us by Interpreters. We charge the moſt elegant Authors with the Barbariſms of their Tranſlators, and, having puddled only in ſome dirty channels, ſuperciliouſly conclude the Fountain to be almoſt choak'd with mud and filth, and by this means perhaps deprive Learning of its more pure and limpid ſtreams. Happy would it be, could we read *Alfarabius*, *Avicenna* and *Avenpace* in the Language in which they wrote; we might then be deem'd not in-

competent Judges of the Learning of the *Arabians.*

I particularize theſe, from among many others, becauſe perhaps ſomething more known to us than others. *Alfarabius* was eſteem'd ſcarce inferior to *Ariſtotle* himſelf, and was juſtly admired for that beauty and perſpicuity of ſtyle with which he lays open the *Arcana* of Philoſophy. Of this we have a remarkable teſtimony in an experiment made by *Avicenna*, who, after he had read over *Ariſtotle*'s Metaphyſics forty times, and had deſpair'd of fathoming the genuine ſenſe of them, upon firſt looking into *Alfarabius*'s explication, gain'd a full and diſtinct comprehenſion of Truths and Principles ſo inveloped and refined, and expreſs'd his exultation on that occaſion (as it were by another *Pythagorean* hecatomb) by making largeſſes to the poor.

The maſterly ſkill and knowledge of the *Arabians* in the art of Healing [20] may, in ſome meaſure, appear from hence; that they introduced Chymiſtry into Phy-

[20] *V. Le Clerc Hiſt. de la Medicine,* p. 771, *& ſeq.*

ſick[21], and ſeveral ſimple Medicines which the *Greeks* do not mention, ſuch, among others, are ſeveral Cathartics, as *Manna*, *Senna*, *Caſſia*, *&c.* which are more agreeable than thoſe made uſe of by the *Greeks*[22]; that they treat of the Small-Pox and other Diſtempers which the *Greeks* are ſilent about[23]; that ſome of the moſt eminent Phyſicians have borrow'd their Preſcriptions from *Arabick* Writers; and I[24] have been aſſured by men of experience and veracity, that our beſt Medicines Antidotes Plaiſters and the like are almoſt the very ſame with thoſe we meet with in *Avicenna*, a Phyſician whoſe Reputation and Authority among the *Africans* and *Aſiatics* infinitely exceed thoſe of *Galen* and *Hippocrates* among the *Greeks* or any other *Europeans*[25].

21 *Milward's Trallian. Reviviſc.* p. 121. *V. Le Clerc, ubi ſupra*, p. 774.

22 It would take up too much room to mention here ſeveral other excellent Medicines for which we are indebted to the *Arabians*. See *Le Clerc, ubi ſupra*, p. 771, 772.

23 *Le Clerc, ibid.* p. 776, 777.

24 *Caſtell, ubi ſupra*, p. 16.

25 *Id. ibid.* p. 16. *Vid. Le Clerc, ubi ſupra*, p. 779. *& ſeq.*

The

The admired excellencies of this Author will, I hope, excuſe my enlarging a little on his Character. He was, not only an elegant Poet and an accurate Grammarian, but alſo, (as characterized by the learned *Tho. Greaves*) ſcarce inferior to the *Stagyrite* in Philoſophy, equal to the greateſt Maſters of Oratory in Eloquence, and unfortunate only in undergoing the common fate of the beſt Authors and ſuffering from his Interpreters[26].

Avenpace, to whoſe ſignal attainments in Philoſophical Knowledge *Maimonides* has endeavour'd to do juſtice, was as excellent a Poet as a Philoſopher.

Averroes, tho' regarded ſometimes in the Schools as a ſecond *Ariſtotle*, I paſs over, becauſe his reputation was not equal to that of the Triumvirate abovemention'd (*Alfarabius Avicenna* and *Avenpace.*)

To the *Arabians* we owe the invention of *Algebra*, the expeditious method we

26 *Vid. Ockleii Introd. ad Ling. Orient.* c. 12. The very learned Dr. *Caſtell* has enter'd into a detail of ſeveral errors and obſcurities, which ſome, who have taken upon them to explain *Avicenna*, have run into; *ubi ſupra*, p. 16, *& ſeq.* See alſo *Le Clerc*, *ubi ſupra*, p. 778.

now uſe in our Calculations, and, not only that admirable perfection to which *Arithmetick* is brought, but, even the uſe and diſcovery of Figures[27], which they received from the *Indians*[28].

The *Arabian* Annals and Hiſtories, which are very numerous, are wrote with ſingular Art, their remarkable Occurrences Laws and Cuſtoms are deſcribed in an elegant Style, and their military Atchievements related almoſt with the ſame Spirit and Energy with which they were perform'd. Were we converſant in their Hiſtories, we ſhould no longer dream of *Mohammed*'s pendulous Tomb, or expoſe ourſelves to the ridicule of his Followers by charging them with imaginary Errors inſtead of refuting real ones. As to Theological Points, if it be incumbent on Chriſtian Divines to know and confute the impious Doctrines of *Mohammed*, it is no leſs neceſſary for them to be acquainted with his Language, without

[27] The Word *Cipher* is a proof of this, it being plainly derived from the *Arabick* صفر.

[28] *Vid. Not. in Anonym. Perſam de Siglis Arab. & Perſ. Aſtronom. a Gravio* edit. p. 2.

which

which their endeavours towards thoſe ends will be ineffectual.

The *Arabick* Language is very ancient, and, we are aſſured by *Aben Ezra Maimonides Kimchi* and other of the moſt eminent Rabbins, that, the knowledge of it is very expedient in order to our becoming acquainted with the *Hebrew*[29]. From hence we may deduce the Etymology of ſeveral Names which occur in the Holy Scriptures, in deriving of which, ſome, thro' their ignorance of the *Arabick*, have render'd themſelves obnoxious to the juſt cenſure of the Critick. And, as the *Hebrew* and *Arabick* have many Roots in common betwixt them, we muſt often have recourſe to the *Arabick* for the better explaining of thoſe *Hebrew* Words, whoſe ſignification is doubtful[30] and become obſcure thro' the miſtakes of Tranſlators. Thus, that paſſage HAB. iii. 17. (according to our Verſion and many others) *Altho' the Fig-Tree ſhall not bloſ-*

29 *Nicholſon. Diſſertat. Philolog.* p. 10.

30 *V. Cl. Hayne Præfat. in Diſſertat. de Ling. Cognat. ap. Crenii Analecta*, p. 10. *Ockleii Introd. ad Ling. Orient.* c. 10.

ſom

ſom— (which contradicts the obſervations of the Naturaliſts in *Paleſtine* and all *Aſia*, who aſſure us, that the Fig-Tree does not bloſſom) is more truly expreſs'd in the *Arabick*, *Altho' the Fig-Tree ſhall not produce fruit.* Thus again, It is foretold of the *Meſſiah*, NUM. xxiv. 17. (according to ſeveral Verſions) that he ſhould *deſtroy all the children of* Seth, that is, *all Mankind*, a Character inconſiſtent with the gracious ends of that Divine Perſon who *came, not to deſtroy men's lives, but, to ſave them*; but the *Arabick*, after the *Chaldee* and *Syriack*, will clear up this difficulty by rendering the Word וקרקר *And He ſhall reign over*, inſtead of *He ſhall deſtroy*, agreeably to the Univerſality of that Government over the Sons of Men, ſo clearly aſcribed by the Prophets to the *Meſſiah* [31].

There are likewiſe many uſeful obſervations, and ſome Ceremonies mention'd in the Bible [32], which may be beſt ex-

[31] The curious Reader may ſee more inſtances to this purpoſe in the learned *Caſtell*'s Oration before-cited, *p.* 25, *&c.*

[32] That Text of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, (xxi. 21.) *The*

plain'd

plain'd by the *Arabick* Books [33].

Another advantage flowing from a knowledge of this Language is, that it admits us to a more intimate acquaintance with ſome of the beſt Rabbins, who wrote in this Language [34]. *Maimonides* penn'd all his compoſitions (except his יד חזקה) in *Arabick*. The Author of *Cozri*, *Abu Zachariah*, *R. Joſeph*, a Diſciple of *Maimonides*, *Auhhado' zzaman Abu'l Baracat*, *R. Tanchum*, *R. Abra-*

king of Babylon *ſtood at the parting of the way —— to uſe divination: he made his Arrows bright, &c.* affords an inſtance to our preſent purpoſe; for, in order to explain the ſuperſtitious Rite here mention'd, we may learn from the great *Pococke* (*Not. in Specim. Hiſt. Arab.* p. 327, 328, 329.) That the *Arabians*, when they had any very momentous buſineſs to deliberate on and tranſact, conſulted certain Arrows; three of which were ſhut up in a veſſel, one inſcribed امرني ربي *My Lord hath commanded me*, another with نهاني ربي *My Lord hath forbidden me*, and the third was without any Inſcription. Upon drawing theſe, if the Arrow which bore the Commanding Inſcription came out, interpreting this as a Divine Direction ſo to do, they Proceeded; if that with the Prohibiting Inſcription, they Deſiſted; and, if the blank Arrow appear'd, they put it in again, and drew 'till one of the others came out. *Vid. Beveridg. de Ling. Orient. Præſt.* p. 32, 33.

33 *Du Pin, Can. of O. and N. Teſt.* B. i. c. 8. § 3.

34 *V. Pocock. Orat. de Ling. Arab.* p. 17.

ham

ham Ben Dior, and many others, who, for the moſt part, were men of greater Learning than the Weſtern Rabbins, convey'd their labours to the world in this Language [35].

The Tranſlations, which both *Jews* and *Chriſtians* have made of the Holy Scriptures into this Language, are by no means to be overlook'd. The Verſion of the Pentateuch, printed by *Erpenius* at *Leyden* in 1622, demands our notice, as the author of it has exactly follow'd the *Hebrew* Text [36], word for word; except, that in ſome paſſages he has alter'd the Phraſe, when the Scripture attributes certain things to God, which, literally taken, belong only to Creatures; in lieu of which, he makes uſe of ſuch expreſſions as he judges more ſuitable to the Divine Majeſty: As for inſtance, whereas he ſhould have tranſlated this paſſage, Exod. xxix. 45, 46. *I will dwell among the children of* Iſrael; he ſays thus, *I will make*

35 *Ockleii Introd. ad Ling. Orient.* c. 10.

36 *Erpen. Dedicat.* p. 6, 7. *Præfat.* p. 1. *huic edit. præfix. Du Pin, ubi ſupra. Diſſert. Critique ſur* נודעתי Exod. vi. 3. *par Souciet*, p. 444.

my

my Glory to dwell among the children of Iſrael[37].

The *Arabiſms*, with which the Book of *Job* abounds, cannot but recommend this Language to the ſtudy of thoſe who would enter into the ſublime and affecting ſtrains of that Divine Compoſition[38].

The uſefulneſs of the *Perſian*, as well as *Arabian* Language may, in ſome meaſure, appear from the knowledge both *Perſians* and *Arabians* had of Aſtronomy, Hiſtory, Chronology, and Geography. The *Epochæ* of that learned Prince *Ulug Beig* are of great importance for correcting a vaſt number of errors in our books of Chronology[39], eſpecially in the manner thoſe *Epochæ* are publiſh'd[40] by that indefatigable Scholar Mr. *Greaves*, who has reduced them to the *Julian* Period and the vulgar *Dionyſian Æra* of *Chriſt*, and added a Praxis of the Tables.

37 *Du Pin, ubi ſupra.*

38 The excellent uſe which the learned *Schultens* has made of the *Arabick*, in his Commentary on the Book of *Job*, ſufficiently confirms this argument.

39 *Birch*'s Life of *Greaves*, p. 35.

40 In *Quarto*, *Lond.* 1650.

As a ſpecimen of their Geographical Learning, I beg leave to refer the Reader to the Tables of *Abulfeda*[41]; which, if the encomiums of *Ramuſius*, the uſe made of them by *Caſtaldus*, and the regard with which *Ortelius* ſpeaks of them, may have any weight, juſtly merit that Eſteem which they have poſſeſs'd among the Learned. The excellent *Erpenius* lamented, that the world was ſo long deprived of them, and intended to have publiſh'd them, but, prevented by death, left the execution of this deſign to the great *Schickard*; who, in his *Tarick Perſicus*, has enrich'd the Republick of Letters with many noble Diſcoveries, unknown even to the *European Literati*, and for which he was wholly indebted to the Geographical Tables of *Abulfeda*[42].

41 *Vid. Ockleii Introd. ad Ling. Orient.* c. 10.

42 The completion of this Work ſeems to have been reſerved for the peculiar Accuracy Induſtry and Learning of Mr. *Gagnier*, who has, not only prepared the Geography of *Abu'l Feda* for the Preſs, but, made ſome progreſs in the Printing thereof; and 'tis much to be wiſh'd, that he was encouraged and enabled to proceed in an Undertaking ſo laborious and expenſive, and which, in all probability, would be of very great Service to the Publick.

This

This *Canon*, or *Rectificatio Terrarum*, of *Abulfeda* was finiſh'd about the year 1321, and appears to be compiled from the principal *Arabian* Writers, particularly *Al Birunius*, whom *Greaves* repreſents as a very great Maſter of the Mathematicks[43]. Nor did the *Arabians* want other excellent Geographers; the works of *Ebn Haukal*, *Al Edriſi*, *Ebn Chordadabah*, *Yacutus al Hamawæus*, not to recite a multitude of other Authors, are ſtanding monuments of their great knowledge in this delightful branch of Learning. And here I beg leave again to mention that eminent Prince *Ulug Beig*, whoſe Geographical Table, as publiſh'd by the excellent *Greaves*, diſcovers that Prince's knowledge of Geography, as his Aſtronomical Tables do his great accuracy in Aſtronomy.

The ſingular diligence and exactneſs, with which *Naſſir Eddin* cultivated and promoted the ſtudy of Geometry and Aſtronomy, have placed him upon a level with, or, perhaps, render'd him ſuperior

43 See *Greaves*'s Preface to *Choraſmiæ & Mawaralnahræ Deſcriptio ex Tabulis Abulfedæ, &c. Lond.* 1650.

to, the moſt celebrated Mathematicians of Antiquity. We are inform'd by *Abul Pharajius*, that he was converſant in, and a great maſter of, all the Sciences; that he invited to him many of the beſt Mathematicians, in order to their joining in making Obſervations on the Heavenly Bodies; and that the Colleges in the territories of the Mogul were put under his direction; that he wrote many Treatiſes in Logick, Natural Philoſophy, Metaphyſicks, upon the Theory of the Planets, in Geometry and Aſtronomy, and that he was author of a Treatiſe in the *Perſian* Tongue, highly commended, upon Moral Philoſophy [44]. The *Tabulæ Ilechanicæ*, which were compiled under his direction, are a proof of the great perfection to which Aſtronomy was brought in the Eaſt. The lights which this Author has afforded alſo to Geography render him truly valuable; the very obſcure accounts, which *Strabo*, *Ptolemy*, and other Geographers of firſt note both among the *Greeks* and *Latins*, have given us of the

[44] *Vid. Abul Pharajii Hiſt. Dynaſt.* p. 548, 549. ed. *Pocock.*

more

more remote parts of *Aſia*, have been much clear'd by and received great improvements from this Author; and, in fine, 'tis to his indefatigable induſtry, either in Travelling himſelf over, or in Extracting with the utmoſt care and exactneſs from the Writings of the *Indians* and *Arabians* accounts of, thoſe Tracts of Land, which were, in a manner, if not abſolutely, *Terra incognita* to the Ancients, that we are highly indebted for our knowledge of them.

The acquaintance the *Arabians* had with Aſtronomy appears from thoſe Aſtronomical Terms which the *Weſterns* have borrow'd from them, as *Zenith*, *Nadir*, *&c.* but much more conſpicuouſly from the valuable labours of *Shah Cholgi*, *Albattani*, *Alfergan*, *Coſta Ebn Luka*, *Naſſir Eddin* and *Kuſhgi* (who, by the way, was the Author of a Treatiſe of the Elements of Arithmetick as well as Aſtronomy.) The great *Alphonſus* was chiefly indebted to the *Jews*, *Moors*, and *Arabians* for thoſe excellent Tables which bear his name[45]. Mr. *Greaves* aſſures us,

[45] *Vid. Gravii Præfat. in Aſtronom. quædam ex Shah Cholgi*, p. 4.

that

that the Commentaries of *Mahmud Shah Cholgi* alone are ſufficient to correct many Errors in Aſtronomy, to refute many Aſſertions in Chronology too eaſily received upon the authority of *Joſeph Scaliger*, and to explain and illuſtrate a variety of things in the *Arabian* writers, eſpecially the Mathematicians[46]. I can't conclude this head without endeavouring to do juſtice to the Character of *Al Mamon*, which deſerves a place among thoſe of the greateſt Princes. His Learning and Munificence to learned Men merit applauſe. It was this Prince who invited Men of Letters from all parts, and who, having ſearch'd out and diſcover'd ſome of the moſt valuable books in the *Greek* Libraries, and cauſing them to be tranſlated into *Arabick*, in a ſhort time brought Learning and uſeful knowledge to the higheſt pitch among the *Arabians*; and 'tis to his Patronage we owe the Preſervation, among the *Arabians*, of many remains of the ancient *Grecian* Sages, which the *Greeks* themſelves confeſs and lament the want of.

[46] *Vid. Grav. ibid.* p. 6.

It

It muſt be own'd, that the loſs of thoſe many valuable Records, which, before the riſe of *Mohammed*, were in the poſſeſſion of the *Chriſtian Arabs*, is much to be regretted by the *Chriſtian* Scholar; but, leſt we ſhould imagine, that the ravages of the *Saracens* and *Turks* have altogether deſtroy'd theſe Treaſures of Learning, we are told by *Erpenius*, upon the relation of very credible eye-witneſſes, that there is at *Fez* one Library which contains above thirty two thouſand Volumes [47]; we are aſſured by Mr. *Thomas Greaves*, that the *Arabians* are ſtill furniſh'd with many Libraries ſo plentifully ſtored with Books, as to ſatiate (if I may be allow'd to borrow *Tully*'s Phraſe) the moſt greedy *Helluo Librorum*, and to illuſtrate the ſecrets of Philoſophy and every branch of Learning [48].

47 *Le Gallois Trait. des Biblioth.* p. 146.

48 *Vid. Th. Greaves, Orat. de Ling. Arab. utilitate, &c.* p. 14. I beg leave alſo here to addreſs the Reader in the words of Dr. *Pococke* to the like effect, *Sunt Arabibus, in omni Literarum genere, gazæ nondum recluſæ, quibus eruendis manum admovere, quo minus infra ſtudiorum tuorum gravitatem exiſtimes, habes, ubique fere gentium, nobiliſſimos viros & conſilio & exemplo præeuntes. Præfat. Specim. Hiſt. Arab.* p. 9. *Vid. Le Clerc, Hiſt. de la Medicine*, p. 771.

In

In fine, whatever parts of the ſyſtem of Learning our genius leads us to, whether Divine or Human Literature engages our attention and ſtudy, we ſhall find the *Arabick* Language highly conducive to our acquiſitions therein.

To thoſe, who make the Holy Scriptures their ſtudy, it will be a ſufficient recommendation of the *Syriack* Language to urge the Antiquity of the *Syriack* Verſion of the Old and New Teſtament; which is generally agreed to have been made in the time of *Thaddæus* the Apoſtle, and bears evident characteriſticks of Antiquity. The Verſion of the New Teſtament is as ancient as the firſt Age of the *Chriſtian* Church, and is aſſign'd to the Apoſtles themſelves, or, at leaſt, to Apoſtolical Men their Diſciples. The Style of it is truly elegant, and it is obſervable, that in the ancient and genuine Edition of it, publiſh'd by *Widmanſtadius*, the ſecond Epiſtle of St. *Peter*, the ſecond and third Epiſtles of St. *John*, the Epiſtle of St. *Jude*, the *Apocalypſe*, and the Accuſation of the Adultreſs, (which laſt particular is omitted likewiſe by S. *Chry-*

S. *Chryſoſtom*, *Theophylact*, and *Nonnus*,) are wanting. Theſe parts of the Sacred Writings not having been, at the time when this Tranſlation was made, admitted by the publick conſent of the Church into the Canon of Scripture. However, when thoſe Portions of Holy Writ were ſo admitted, they alſo were tranſlated into the *Syriack* Language. To this argument we may add, that the *Syriack* was the Language in which our Bleſſed Saviour converſed; that the *Syriaciſms* and even *Syriack* Words, which occur in the New Teſtament, ſeem to make the knowledge of this Language neceſſary to thoſe that would clearly underſtand the true import of ſuch Words and Phraſes [49].

The expediency of an acquaintance with the *Syriack*, in order to the attaining a perfect knowledge of the *Hebrew*, is no ſmall inducement to our applying ourſelves to the ſtudy of it. And ſo remarkable is the Connection and Affinity between theſe two Languages, or rather Dialects, that thoſe great and excellent

49 *Vid. Beveridg. de Ling. Orient. Præſtant.*

Interpreters of the Holy Scripture, the *LXX. Symmachus*, *Theodotion*, and *Aquila*, made the Idiom of the *Syriack*, as it were, their compaſs to ſteer by in their Tranſlations of ambiguous and difficult paſſages in the *Hebrew* [50].

The argument uſed in favour of the *Syriack* Language, *viz.* the Antiquity of the *Syriack* Verſion of the Old Teſtament, will hold *a fortiori* with regard to the *Samaritan*. For the *Chaldee-Samaritan* Verſion of this part of Scripture (according to the learned *Walton*) was made before the Commencement of the *Chriſtian Æra*. As to the *Samaritan* Pentateuch, there are very plauſible reaſons to ſhew, that it is not later than that of *Eſdras*; namely, the improbability, that the *Samaritans* ſhould make profeſſion of the Law of *Moſes* ſo long without having the Pentateuch; that the *Cutheans* (who came from *Perſia* and *Aſſyria*, where they rather made uſe of the *Chaldee* Characters) ſhould have taken the *Canaanitiſh* Characters, if they had not had the

[50] *Fulleri Miſcell. Sacr.* l. iii. c. 20.

Law

Law written in thoſe Characters. Had they received the Sacred Books after the time of *Eſdras*, in the time of *Manaſſes*, they would not only have had the Pentateuch, but alſo all the reſt comprized in the Canon of the Sacred Books written by *Eſdras*; but the ancient *Samaritans* neither had nor acknowledged any other to be Sacred but the Pentateuch. It ſeems then probable, that the *Samaritans* had their Pentateuch before *Eſdras* made up his Canon; and, that the *Samaritan* Pentateuch which we have is the ſame with that which the *Samaritans* had formerly, ſeems ſufficiently evident from many paſſages of the Ancients [1].

In ſhort, theſe ancient Verſions are of the greateſt uſe, both to preſerve and corroborate the original Text. They were publiſh'd before Hereſy and Impiety were grown ſo barefaced in the Church of God, before ſo many various Readings had crept into the Sacred Text, and before the Idiom and Propriety of the *He-*

[1] See this point largely diſcuſs'd by the learned Monſ. *Du Pin*, in his *Hiſtory of the Canon of the Old and New Teſtament*, B. i. c. 5. § 2, 3.

brew Tongue were become ſtrange and uncouth to the Tranſlators[2].

The *Æthiopick* Language will be of uſe to us in interpreting Scripture, as it affords us the Etymologies and proper Significations of ſeveral *Hebrew* and *Arabick* words, which we ſhould be otherwiſe at a loſs to diſcover. It bears a very near affinity to the *Arabick*, is confined to almoſt the ſame rules of Grammar, and, in particular, the formation of the Conjugations in both Languages is in a manner the ſame. The *Æthiopick* is uſeful, not only in leading us to a knowledge of the Writings and Hiſtory of the *Habeſſines*, but alſo, in illuſtrating the other *Eaſtern* Languages; thus the word ملائك *(Angelus)* is not derived from the *Arabick* ملك *(Poſſedit, Dominatus eſt)* but from the *Æthiopick* ለአከ *(Miſit, Legavit.)* So likewiſe an *Apoſtle*, or *Perſon commiſſion'd* or *ſent*, is in the *Alcoran* term'd حواري the root of which word is not to be met with in the *Arabick* Lexicons, but is derived from the *Æthiopick* ሐወረ *(Ivit, Inceſſit)*

[2] *Vid. Beveridg. de Ling. Orient. præſt.* p. 21, &c.

Inceſſit) he went, which is the proper buſineſs of an Apoſtle or Perſon ſent, and implies the execution of his commiſſion [3]. So likewiſe as to the *Hebrew*, while ſome Authors have derived the name of *Adam* from the *Hebrew* אדם which ſignifies to *redden*, and have contented themſelves with that inſipid *Etymon*, on a ſuppoſition that the firſt Man was form'd out of Red Earth, the *Æthiopick* አደመ (which ſignifies *beautiful)* ſupplys us with a reaſon for aſſigning this name to that noble Creature who came ſo perfect and beautiful out of the hands of his Omnipotent and Allwiſe Creator [4].

It has been already obſerved, that the Wiſdom of the *Egyptians* was ſuch and ſo generally admired, as to draw the moſt eminent Philoſophers of Antiquity into *Egypt* for Improvement and Inſtruction, and their reputation in this reſpect was ſo great in the time of *Herodotus*, as to in-

3 *Ockleii Introd. ad Ling. Orient.* c. 13. *Ludolf. Comment. in Hiſt. Æthiop.* p. 207. The Reader is referr'd for ſome further ſpecimens to this purpoſe to the learned *Ludolfus, Comm. in Hiſt. Æthiop.* p. 202. *& ſeq.*

4 *Vid. Ludolf. Hiſt. Æthiop.* l. i. c. 15. *& Comment.* p. 207.

duce

duce him to ſtyle them Σοφώτατοι ἀνθρώπων [5]. The *Coptic* being the moſt ancient Language except the *Hebrew* [6], we may reaſonably expect to find ſome remains, at leaſt, of theſe Treaſures of Wiſdom, by purſuing them in their proper channel, the *Egyptian* or *Coptick* Language; for, as a great part of the Mythology and Theology of the *Greeks* was derived from the *Egyptians*, ſo, it was convey'd in the terms and expreſſions of the *Egyptians*.

The Λείψανα of the ancient *Egyptian* Language (which the learned *Reland* has collected and Dr. *Wilkins* has expatiated on and explain'd with ſingular Accuracy and Learning [7]) are a ſufficient ſpecimen of the uſeful illuſtrations, which may be drawn from this Language, to the explaining and confirming the more obſcure and myſterious paſſages of *Plutarch*, *Macrobius*, and other *Greek* and *Latin* Writers; and 'tis to be wiſh'd, that this indefatigable Philologer (Dr. *Wilkins*) would gratify the World with his *Treatiſe of the* Λείψανα

5 *Wilkins, Diſſert. de Ling. Copt.* p. 80.
6 *Id. ibid.* p. 78. 7 *Ibid.* p. 94, & *ſeq.*

of

of the ancient Egyptian *Language as explaining the* Greek *Antiquities*, which would doubtleſsly farther evidence the advantages of a knowledge of the *Coptic* on this account [8].

Laſtly, the lights, which this Language affords to the *Hebrew* Letters and Antiquities [9], and the Age of the *Coptic* Verſion of the New Teſtament, (which, in this point, takes places of all the Verſions but the *Syriack* [10]) ought to be ſtill greater recommendations of it to us.

As to the *Armenian* Language, it may, in ſome degree, recommend it to us of this Nation to obſerve, with the learned *Bernard*, that our Mother-Tongue flows, in a great meaſure, from it [11].

The antiquity of it is very conſiderable [12], and the Language is render'd more valuable by the Hiſtorical Remains preſerved in it, thro' the care and labour of

8 *V. La Croze, Diſſert. Philol. de var. Ling.* p. 135, 136.

9 *V. Bonjour*, § xix. *& ſeq. Exercit. in Monumenta Copt, ſeu Ægypt. Biblioth. Vaticanæ. La Croze, ubi ſupra.*

10 *Wilkins, Prolegom. in Nov. Teſt. Copt.* p. 2. *vide etiam* p. 5.

11 *Ockleii Introd. ad Ling. Orient.* c. 13.

12 *V. Schroderi Diſſertat. de Antiq. &c. Ling. Armen.* c. i. § 1, *&c.*

Moyſes

Moyſes Chorenenſis, a Writer of the fourth Century. This author made conſiderable collections from the *Chaldæan* and *Græcian* Archives[13], but form'd his Hiſtory principally out of the Memoirs of *Maribas Catina*, who was contemporary with *Arſaces*[14], and, by his permiſſion, had acceſs to the Royal Archives of his Empire. By means of this advantage, he diſcover'd a Volume of Hiſtory, beginning very early, and tranſlated out of *Chaldee* into *Greek* by the command of *Alexander*. From this he extracted a Hiſtory of the *Armenian* Nation, which his Prince, *Walarſaces*, preſerved as a moſt valuable treaſure, and order'd ſome parts of it to be engraven on Pillars. I am the more particular in tracing up the Antiquity and Authority of this Hiſtory on account of a remarkable Teſtimony it affords us to the truth of the *Moſaic* account of the Confuſion of Languages. The paſſage is preſerved entire by *Moyſes Chorenenſis* in the words of *Maribas*, and informs us, that there was a race of Giants, who conceived

[13] *Id. ibid.* [14] This Prince lived about two hundred and fifty years before CHRIST.

and

and attempted an impious and arrogant deſign of building a Tower, and that, while they were employ'd in this undertaking, a terrible Wind, ſent by the anger of the Gods, diſſipated the ſuperb Edifice, and convey'd to the ſeveral Builders a new and unheard of Speech, from whence the deſign ended in Tumult and Confuſion [15].

The *Armenian* Language, tho' ſomewhat harſh in the Pronunciation, is not without its Elegancies, venerable for the antiquity of their phraſeology, and to be eſteem'd for their energy of diction. It is enrich'd with ſimple words epithets and ſynonymous terms as well as derivatives and compounds. The copiouſneſs of it renders Tranſlations from other languages into it eaſy; but it ſeems peculiarly adapted, in this reſpect, to the *Greek* by the ſingular analogy which appears between the two Languages [16].

As the *Haican* or *Armenian* nation embraced the Chriſtian Faith very early, their Verſion of the Holy Scriptures is an-

[15] *Vid. Schroder. ubi ſupra,* § 9, 11.
[16] *Id. ibid.* c. iii. § 9. c. iv. § 7.

cient [17], and their Hiſtory of the Church, (eſpecially of the *Eaſtern* diviſion of it) of Councils, Canons, and Hereſies, juſtly to be regarded.

Their Civil Hiſtory ſufficiently repreſents to us the moſt remarkable occurrences in their State, and the Government and Polity of it [18]; and their inſight into Philoſophy, Geography [19], Aſtronomy and Natural Hiſtory, will furniſh us with a great deal of uſeful inſtruction in theſe branches of knowledge [20].

Laſtly, the *Armenian* Language is farther ſerviceable in diſcovering to us the true original and import of ſome Scripture words [21], and giving us a clear and juſt notion of ſeveral terms which occur in *Greek* and *Latin* Authors [22].

It is obſerved by the very learned *Beveridge*, that 'tis impoſſible to arrive at a perfect knowledge of the *Hebrew* without being, in ſome meaſure, acquainted with the other *Eaſtern* Languages [23]. But, that

17 *Id. ibid.* c. iv. § 2, 5, 7. 18 *Id. ibid.* § 2.
19 *Id. ibid.* § 10. *Diſſert. de Rebus Armen.* p. 145, *& ſeq.*
20 *Id. de Antiq. &c. Ling. Armen.* c. iv. § 2.
21 *Id. ibid.* § 3. 22 *Id. ibid.* § 4.
23 *De Ling. Orient. Præſt.* p. 18, 29.

we may not be diſcouraged by a proſpect in appearance ſo extenſive, and imagine we are entering on a boundleſs field of ſpeculation and ſtudy, the ſame great writer aſſures us, That theſe Languages are ſurprizingly eaſy, that, after we have made ourſelves maſters of the *Hebrew*, which is the eaſieſt of all, a little induſtry and application will render the others familiar to us; and confirms this obſervation by his own experience[24].

Nor indeed have we any room to doubt of this, when we conſider, that the moſt ancient Languages of the *Eaſtern* People, *Hebrews*, *Chaldæans*, *Arabs*, *Syrians* and *Phœnicians* or *Canaanites*, are nothing almoſt but the Dialects of the ſame Language[25], and, conſequently mutually facilitate and illuſtrate each other.

I have already mentioned the treaſure of Learning which is ſtill preſerved in the Libraries of the Eaſt, and which cannot but incite the Curioſity of the Scholar; but, leaſt the diſtance of theſe repo-

24 *Ibid.* p. 34. 25 *Du Pin's Hiſt. of the Canon of the Old and New Teſt.* b. i. c. 4. § 1. *Fulleri Miſcell. Sacr.* l. iii. c. 20. *Ludolf. Comment. in Hiſt. Æthiop.* p. 203.

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ſtories ſhould diſcourage our purſuits, it may be proper to intimate, that our own Country is well ſtored with *Eaſtern* Manuſcripts; and I cannot without concern obſerve, that the excellent Collection of them, which is one chief Ornament of the *Bodleian* Library, has laid too long neglected and too much buried to the learned World. I confeſs, the retrieving theſe Volumes from mould'ring into oblivion has been no ſmall inducement to the attempting this Eſſay, and, if it ſucceeds ſo far as to incline any Member of that venerable Seat of Learning, which enjoys this moſt valuable Library, to employ his Thoughts to this end, I ſhall have the vanity to think I have done ſome Service to the Republick of Letters.

FINIS.